



## **MAKE-A-WISH FOUNDATION® FACT SHEET 2006**

### **OUR MISSION**

The Make-A-Wish Foundation® of Alaska, Montana, Northern Idaho & Washington grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy.

### **WISH GRANTING**

The Foundation becomes aware of eligible children through wish referrals, which are accepted from the children themselves, their parents or legal guardians, and from medical professionals such as physicians, nurses, social workers, child-life specialists and therapists.

Make-A-Wish has three requirements before a wish can be granted:

- The child is at least 2½ and no more than 18 years of age.
- The child's physician medically qualifies the child.
- The child has not received a previous wish from the Make-A-Wish Foundation or any other recognized wish-granting organization.

Wishes reflect a child's heartfelt desire, and can range from something grand and complex to something simple and basic. Often, a wish is limited only by the child's imagination and physical ability to participate in the wish. Most wishes tend to fall into one of four categories:

- "I wish to be..."
- "I wish to go..."
- "I wish to have..."
- "I wish to meet..."

### **OUR BACKGROUND**

In February 1986, the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Washington state was founded. In its first year, the chapter granted a total of six wishes. The organization grew rapidly, as more children had their wishes granted throughout the state each year. In 2000, the chapter increased its service area by adding Alaska, Montana and Northern Idaho.

The local chapter serves the largest geographic territory in the country. More than 7,000,000 people live in these four states, which covers almost 800,000 miles. On average, more than 20 wishes are granted each month to kids as far north as North Pole, Alaska and as far east as Sidney, Mont. This year, the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Alaska, Montana, Northern Idaho & Washington is celebrating two milestones: 20 years of wishes and surpassing the 3,000 wish mark.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation of America was founded in Phoenix, Ariz., back in 1980. The organization began when a group of people helped a young boy with leukemia achieve his wish to be a state trooper for a day. Since that time, the Make-A-Wish Foundation has grown into a worldwide service organization with 71 chapters across the United States and 28 international affiliates on five continents. To date, the Foundation has granted more than 144,000 wishes worldwide.

## **FUNDING**

The Make-A-Wish Foundation is financed entirely through private contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations. In addition, the Foundation relies on in-kind contributions to defray the cost of goods and services. The Make-A-Wish Foundation DOES NOT solicit for contributions over the phone or door-to-door.

Make-A-Wish is purposefully generous when fulfilling dreams. When a child and his or her family are on a wish, everything is paid for and provided. The goal is to create a time for a child that is totally worry-free. The Foundation grants the wish, arranges all the details, and then steps back and lets the family make a lifetime of memories. Each wish is truly as unique as each child, meaning there is no set price for any wish.

Of each dollar spent, 76 cents is used for the program, 15 cents for fundraising expenses, and nine cents for administrative support. The Make-A-Wish Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Donations are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are the backbone to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. More than 25,000 volunteers help Make-A-Wish Foundation serve children with life-threatening medical conditions. The local chapter has more than 600 volunteers, with approximately 400 located in Western Washington. Each volunteer has the choice of serving as a wish granter, fundraiser, special event assistant, or numerous other capacities.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

A Board of Trustees governs the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Alaska, Montana, Northern Idaho & Washington. The Foundation's staff works in concert with hundreds of volunteers and donors to help turn children's wishes into reality. The local chapter has offices in Seattle, Spokane and Anchorage.

## **LIFE-AFFIRMING PRINCIPLES**

The Make-A-Wish Foundation is a life-affirming organization that focuses on the joy of the wish experience, not the pain and uncertainty of the child's illness. The Foundation strives to dispel the idea that the organization only grants wishes to "terminally ill" or "gravely ill" children, as many of the kids the Foundation serves overcome their illness.

## **CHAIN LETTERS**

The Make-A-Wish Foundation does not conduct wishes of any kind that involve chain letters.

If anyone receives a chain letter or e-mail claiming to be associated with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, please direct the sender and all recipients to the chain letter section of the Make-A-Wish Web site at [www.wish.org](http://www.wish.org).

The time spent responding to these requests distracts the Foundation from its efforts to fulfill the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions. And in some situations, chain letters spread information that is potentially harmful to a child and his or her family.